

American Girl

September/October 2002

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Chalkboard**

**Make Great
Stuff for
School**

**Mysteries
to Solve**

PLUS!
*Make your
jeans look
super cute!*

Girls Rescue Lucky Dogs

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See AG Online!

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Tricky Pix 2

More eye-popping photos taken by girls like you!

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Start the school year in style with our clever crafts and tips.

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Look for fun facts sprinkled throughout the magazine!



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What's Your Sports Style?

Find out if you're best as a solo competitor or a team player.

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Alexa M.

About the Cover

Meet Alexa M. and her furry friend, Peanut. They had fun playing in the leaves at our photo shoot. To learn more about Alexa and Peanut, be sure to check out "Behind the Scenes" on page 49.

Mini Mysteries

Are you a super sleuth? Try to solve these three cases!

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Letters from You



Doodled Design

Thank you so much for "Choose a Doodle" from May/June 2002. I used some of your ideas in a T-shirt design contest at my school, and I won! My design appeared on all the seventh-graders' shirts, and everyone loved them.

Rose K.
Age 13, Florida



Jump to It!

I loved the article "Jump Start" in May/June. It's really neat that Brittany was a regular kid and then became a rising pop star. It's awesome that she met Aaron Carter! And I bet she's happy that she gets to sing and dance with her brother in Jump 5.

Paige C.
Age 8, Idaho



Star Sibs

It's great that you included the "Small-Screen Sibs" in the article about siblings in the May/June issue. My friend and I totally agree with your readers about who would make a good

sibling and who wouldn't. How can I write to Christy Carlson Romano and Hilary Duff?

Caroline K.
Age 9, New York

Write to Christy and Hilary at:
Disney Channel, Fan Mail Dept.,
500 S. Buena Vista St.,
Burbank, CA 91521.



Helping Hands

I loved "Amelia Lends a Hand" from May/June. I think it's important to teach kids sign language. There are three deaf students at my school, but I was afraid to talk to them. Their interpreter showed my class the alphabet, and I practiced and kept trying new signs. Now I can talk to my new friends!

Leah C. :-)

Write to Us!

Want to drop us a line? Write us at:

AmericanGirl

8400 Fairway Place
Middleton, WI 53562

You can also send letters via e-mail to
im_agmag_editor@pleasantco.com.

No matter how you write us, be sure to include your name and birth date. We can't use every letter we receive, but we read and learn from each one.



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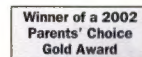
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AmericanGirl

Girls Express



Buzzword

American girls everywhere will be using this buzzword this season:

hullabaloo

How to say it: **HUL-uh-buh-loo**

What it means: **a loud noise or uproar.**

Where it comes from: **"hulla" comes from an old form of "hello," and "baloo" may come from an old Scottish word used to tell noisy children to be quiet.**

One way to use it: **"Whitney caused quite a hullabaloo when she introduced her pet cat to her best friend's new puppy."**



The buzzword is tucked somewhere into this issue of *American Girl*. Can you find it? Answer is on page 42.

Fry Fanatic

For 11-year-old Kate S., every day is a Fry-day! When Kate's teacher gave his students an assignment to write to a person or business and make a crazy request, Kate decided to ask for her favorite snack: curly fries. She sent her letter to the managers of the Arby's restaurant in her Michigan hometown. "You have really good food and I like eating there," she wrote. "My outrageous request is to get a lifetime supply of curly fries for free." Much to Kate's surprise, she got her wish! Kate received a certificate good for free fries for the rest of her life at her local Arby's.

Some other students in Kate's class got what they asked for, too. One kid got a month's supply of chocolate milk, and another landed a free ice cream party—though a boy who wrote to a teacher asking for no homework for a year was turned down. Kate's classmates agree that her fries prize was best in the class. What did Kate learn from her silly school project? "If you want something," she says, "you should ask for it!"

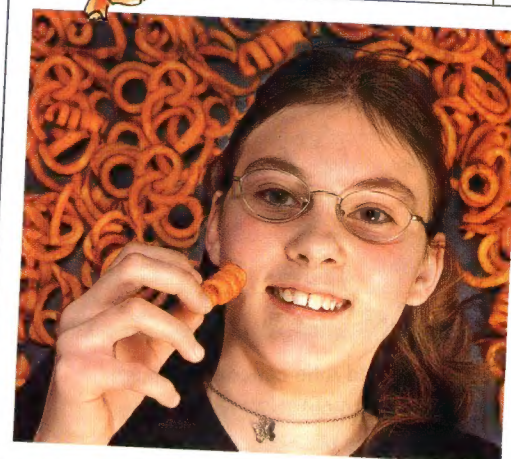


Photo by © The Grand Rapids Press



Shining Stars

Allie S. and Jackie C., both 14, have been playing soccer since they were very young. Season after season, the Illinois girls got new uniforms and cleats as they outgrew their old ones. Then the two friends decided to do something with all their outgrown soccer stuff. Allie and Jackie started Team2Team, a program that collects used sports equipment for kids in need. "A lot of kids can't afford soccer jerseys," Jackie explains. "They don't have nice equipment. They don't have nice shoes."



Jackie and Allie collected enough uniforms to outfit 23 teams, plus many pairs of shoes, socks, and shin guards. "It was an awesome experience," says Allie, "and all for a good cause!" The girls hope other soccer-loving kids will run with their idea and start similar programs in their own hometowns.

You can shine, too!

To donate your gear, write to
AYSO Suit Up Program, c/o Tom Rios,
12501 S. Isis Ave.,
Hawthorne, CA 90250,
or call 1-800-USA-AYSO,
extension 541.

Scout It Out

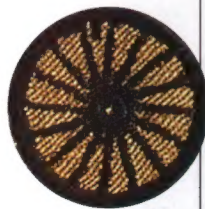
Girl Scouts turned 90 this year! Take a look at some funny badges from the past, and see how much scouting has changed.

1920s Badges



Economist: Learn to keep your clothes in good repair and buy quality shoes, stockings, and gloves.

Cyclist: Own a bike and pledge to offer it to the government in case of need.



Health Winner: Go to bed by 9:30, don't go to parties on school nights, and don't eat too many sweets.

Today's Badges



Adventure Sports: Learn skills in rock climbing, surfing, mountain biking, and kayaking.

Environmental Health: Learn the effects of sun damage and air and water pollution.



Girl Scout uniforms then and now.



Mountain Do!

Nicole W. knows what it's like to feel on top of the world. You can find out, too, by watching Nicole's 19,340-foot climb to the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro on the big screen. Nicole's climb is featured in the movie *Kilimanjaro: To the Roof of Africa*, now playing at select IMAX theaters.

Nicole, 14, had dreamed of reaching the peak since she was five years old. So when she got the chance to join her dad and his crew of climbers in 2000, her excitement zoomed sky-high. The trek was tough, but the Massachusetts girl treasures her experience. "I know I can do anything now," Nicole says.



Spider Snack

Make these creepy-crawly cookies for all your friends!

1 Ask an adult to microwave 1 **Oreo Double Stuf** cookie for 10 seconds.

2 Push 8 short strands of **licorice** into the warmed Oreo filling to make the spider's legs.

3 Use small dabs of **frosting** to attach 2 **M&M's** to the edge of the cookie for eyes. Add frosting pupils.



True Story

Chantyl P. gives thanks to the hero who saved her life.

Dear American Girl,



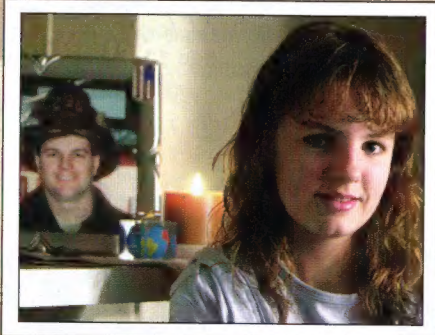
I wouldn't be here today to tell this story if not for a man who is, to me, the best hero who ever lived. When I was three years old, I had a disease called aplastic anemia. The only cure is a bone marrow transplant. No one in my family was a match for me, so my doctors put me on the national list to find a donor. Chances were slim that they would find one.

Luckily, they found a match! When I was five, I got my transplant from a donor I called "Mr. Nice Man"—I wasn't allowed to know my donor's identity until one year after my transplant. Finally I learned that Mr. Nice Man's name was Terry, and he was a New York City fireman. Soon I met Terry and his family. I knew I would love him as long as I lived.

I visited Terry and his family again three years ago. I wanted Terry to see how healthy I was and how much I'd grown. I also wanted to thank him. I had hoped to meet Terry once every five years throughout my life, but, sadly, I cannot. Terry died at the World Trade Center last September 11. He was doing what he did best—saving lives. I went to his funeral to read a prayer. I owe everything to Terry, my Mr. Nice Man. Every breath I take is because of him. I will live the rest of my life trying to make him proud that he saved me.

Sincerely,

Chantyl P.
Age 13, Nevada



AG

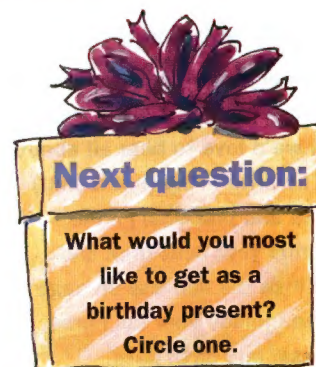
POLL



Your answers:

In our May/June 2002 issue, we asked you who you'd most like to invite to your birthday party. Here's what you said:

1. **Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen**
2. **Britney Spears**
3. **Aaron Carter**



- A.** A regular gift, like clothes or toys
- B.** A gift certificate from your favorite store
- C.** Cash inside your birthday card
- D.** A donation to charity made in your name

Why?



Cut out your answer and mail it to us with your full name, address, and birth date.



Go Hawaiian

What's the latest look in school uniforms? Hawaiian shirts! The girls at one trendsetting California school love their new tropical dress code. "My favorite outfit is the dark blue Hawaiian-print shirt and the matching capris," raves Katie P., age 12. "Until this year," adds Catherine C., age 9, "'uniform' was a bad word."

School Supply Contest

We give your creativity an **A+**!



"Slide my magic eye across words you don't know and it tells you what they mean."

Michelle J.
Age 10, Ohio



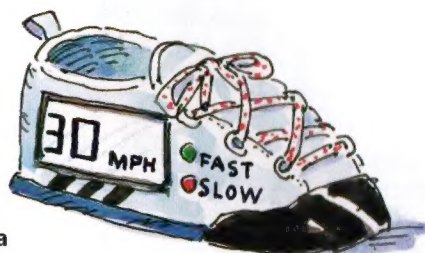
"Just press a button and my automatic hand shoots into the air. Your arm never gets tired."

Kallen H.
Age 13, Indiana



"You can program my gym shoes to run as fast as you want them to."

Jesse C.
Age 12, Pennsylvania



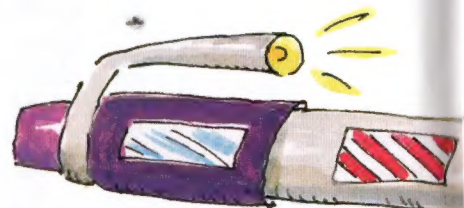
"Chew my invisible gum in school without getting caught!"

Michelle F.
Age 11, Pennsylvania



"My perfect pen has erasable ink, a light for doing homework at night, and lip gloss inside the eraser!"

Joyce P.
Age 13, Iowa

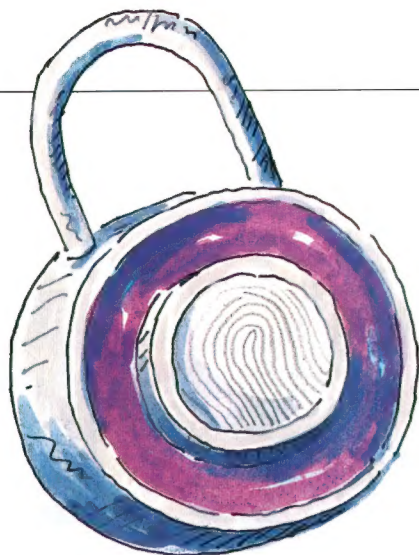


Cut out your answer and mail it to us.

Help Wanted!

Do you enjoy fooling your friends? Do you think tricks are a treat? Then we'd love to hear all about your favorite funny (not mean!) pranks and practical jokes. Describe your best trick and send it to the address on page 2. Please include your full name, address, and birth date.





"Press your thumb at the center of my lock and it reads your fingerprint and opens. No more combinations to memorize!"

Hannah L.
Age 14, North Carolina



"Our book zapper shrinks your books to pocket size."



Sara D.
Age 12, Connecticut



Adrienne B.
Age 12, Connecticut



"My work perfecter corrects grammar, spelling, and messy writing and even straightens crumpled paper!"

Rachel M.
Age 11, North Carolina



"Press the buttons on my lunchbox to get the food you want. Never worry again about getting PB&J when you really want a turkey sandwich."

Emily C.
Age 9, Ohio



"Tired of lugging around heavy backpacks? Just press the 'go' button, and my backpack walks for you."

Nora G.
Age 12, Pennsylvania



New Contest

How do you like to wear your hair? Send us a snapshot of your **most glamorous hairstyle**, your **wackiest look**, or your **best braid style**. Give your style a name, and tell us how you did it. Creativity counts, but no makeup, please—we want you looking your natural best. Mail your picture to the address on page 2 with your full name, address, and birth date. **Deadline: October 15, 2002.** Winners will appear in the March/April 2003 issue.



Photo: Sandy May

School Smarts

What have you learned about tests, teachers, homework, and school that you wish you'd known earlier?



I've learned that when a teacher reviews some-

thing right before a test, it usually means that it's important and you should take notes. You should also take notes on questions the teacher asks. Chances are, they'll be on the test!

Emma T.
Age 11, Florida



I found out that I should go to bed much earlier than

I do. I don't get enough sleep, and in the mornings my mom has to wake me up because I'm tired, and I'm late for school. It drives me crazy! This year my goal is to go to bed early and be on time.

Marisa O.
Age 10, Oregon



I wrote my locker combination inside my shoe.

Anytime I forgot it, I just had to look in my shoe. If you try this, make sure you write the combination on the *side* of the inside of your shoe, not the sole, so it doesn't wear off.

Lindsay H.
Age 12, Michigan



I wish I'd known at the beginning of the year that

it's not the end of the world to get something wrong once in a while. I used to get so worried about my grades that I'd get sick just because we were going to have a test that day. Now I know that if I make a mistake, I can always learn from it.

Karen K.
Age 12, Iowa



In fifth grade, I had to learn the spelling and

definitions of 20 words. One night I spelled the words and said the definitions on a tape recorder. When I played the tape back, I had time to think and spell each word along with it. I passed the test and even got the extra-credit words right!

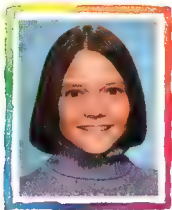
Jenna M.
Age 11, California



I was nervous last year because it was the first

time I'd ever had a man for a teacher! I wish I would have known what it would be like, because he's cool.

Abigail G.
Age 10, Pennsylvania



To study, I read a page in my textbook, then think of questions that might be on the test and write them down. I do the whole chapter that way. When I'm done, I type up my questions. Then I take my made-up test. It really helps!

Stephanie D.
Age 12, New York



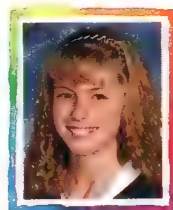
I wish I had been more organized at the beginning of the school year. I lost a few homework assignments just because I was careless. Now I keep important stuff *in* my notebook—not on top of it!

Rebekah D.
Age 11, Georgia



I've learned not to be afraid to ask questions. No teacher, not even a mean one, will think you're stupid because you're confused about a math problem. So go ahead and ask!

Rebecca R.
Age 9, Virginia



If I have a report to do, I mark the day it's due on my calendar. Then I put a star a week or two earlier. I do all my reading and research by then. On the day with the star, I start writing the report. I always finish on time.

Sara B.
Age 11, Utah



Always check your work, no matter what it is, and make sure it's right. I wish I'd known that before. One time I could have gotten 100 percent on an assignment, but I didn't check my work, and there was a mistake!

Lauren M.
Age 10, New York



If your teacher seems mean, remember that it's a new class for her, too. Give her a little time to get to know you better. Remember to treat her with respect, and she should do the same for you.

Kelcie E.
Age 11, Georgia



Whenever I don't feel like going to school, I think of one good thing that's happening that day. Maybe it's doing a science experiment or seeing a movie in social studies. It gets me excited to go to school.

Madeleine L.
Age 12, Illinois

Speak from Your Heart

Next subject: Saying Sorry. Tell us about a time you had to apologize to someone. What happened?

What did you say or do to try to make things better? Did it work? Has someone ever apologized to you in a creative way? How did it make you feel?

Send answers, full name, birth date, and photo to: **AmericanGirl**
8400 Fairway Place, Middleton, WI 53562.

Deadline: October 7, 2002.

Some answers will appear in the March/April 2003 issue. ★



Amelia's Notebook

HOW TO AVOID THE

Dreaded



Do I look fat?

by Marissa Moss
(and picture-perfect Amelia)

My sister practices her "looks" in the mirror. No matter what she does to her face, she still looks like Cleo.



↑
Cleo's dramatic look



↑
Cleo's I-know-something look



↑
Cleo's ya-gotta-be-kidding look

if the pictures are taken after lunch, make sure there's **NOTHING** between your teeth.

ooo

Lunch was yummy today!

It'll grow out - I HOPE!



DON'T get your hair cut the day before Picture Day.

Is this ME?



DON'T let your friend give you a makeover - you might end up looking like an alien.

If I can just reach that spot - quick, before he snaps the photo.



DON'T wear itchy clothes, no matter how cool they look.

School

CHEESE!

Photo

CHEESIER!



When the photographer says

"Say cheese," **DON'T**

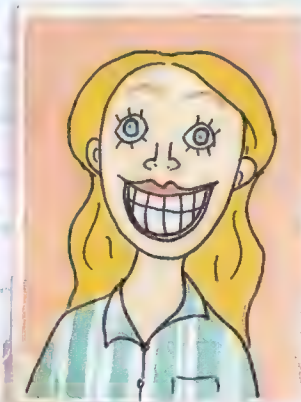
think of stinky, grown-up type cheese, or you'll look like you
← smell something nasty!

How can anyone eat cheese that smells like dirty socks?

DON'T

look so fake
no one can tell it's you.

Now I look better than me!



my sophisticated, I-know-that look



my excited, perky look



my been-there, done-that look



I thought this was a highly successful look, but when I tried it on Carly, she asked if I had a stomach-ache or something.

DO try to just act natural.

me, Amelia



This is me. I look pretty normal, except for the you-look-so-cute hairdo by Mom - and the dress. That's definitely not normal!

Nadia



This is my old best friend Nadia, from before I moved. She sent me her latest school photo. Her picture doesn't lie - she's as nice as she looks!

For more advice, check out the new book Amelia's School Survival Guide!

It's a new school year...

Make It Great

Jittery Jane

Remember that it's everybody's first day of school, so you aren't the only one who's a little nervous. Take time to smile and say "hi" to old friends as well as new faces.

Sunny Days

Sad to see summer over so soon? Tape a piece of a great summer memory to the inside of your folder. Every time you look at it, you'll smile!

Dinner Date

Keep track of everything that happens on your first day. Then, recount the stories (and say!) words of the day while having a special "first day of school" dinner with Mom and Dad.

Tiny Tags



Make personal ID tags for your school stuff!

Ask an adult to help you use Shrink Art (available at craft stores) to create the tags. Use a paper punch to make holes in the tags before you bake them (remember that the holes will shrink while baking!). Attach key chains to each tag and hang them on school supplies.

Fun Fur

Place a piece of faux fur on your locker shelf.

School Rule

Check your school's policy on decorating lockers before doing anything to yours. If you can't use these ideas at school, try them at home.

Locker Mates

If you share a locker, check with your locker partner before hanging up lots of your things. Collaborate with her to decide how you are going to decorate.



Hip to Be Square

Use acrylic paint and a paintbrush to cover a small cork square (available at office supply stores). Let dry. Attach self-adhesive magnets to the back and hang in your locker.



Stick Around

Look for a cute applique at a craft store and glue a magnet on the back. Hang it in your locker or give it to a friend as a back-to-school gift!



Hold It

Make a cup to hold supplies. Cut a strip of scrapbook paper to fit around a clean snack-sized Pringles can. Use a glue stick to attach the paper to the can. Hang the can in your locker using a magnetic clip.



Make It Your

Picture This

Find a small photo mat. Use scrapbook paper and a glue stick to decorate the mat. Place double-sided tape on the sides and bottom of the back of the mat (leave the top untaped). Stick the mat to the front of a binder,

and slide a photo in through the top. Change the photo whenever you want!



"Whenever I have a big test coming up, my friends and I get together and have a 'Test-a-Thon.' We make up flash cards and play a game like Jeopardy. It's really fun!"

Kiara :-)
Age 12, Virginia



Fluffy Stuff

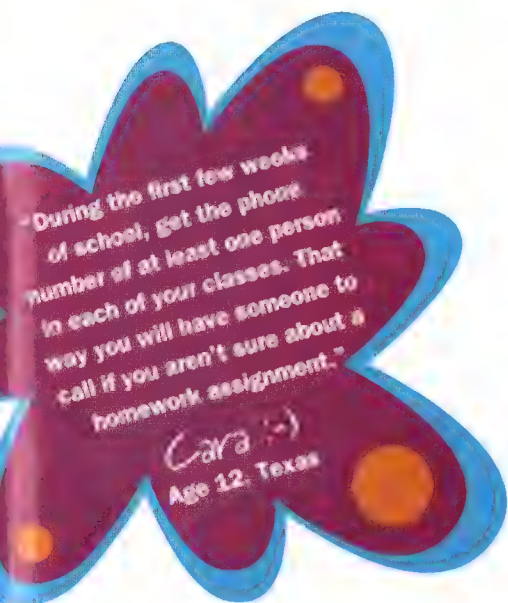
Glue a piece of faux fur to the front of a notebook. Cut off extra fur, fluff, and go!

"Whenever I get frustrated with my homework, I stop and take a walk. All the stress goes away and I'm ready to tackle fractions head-on!"

Julie :-)
Age 13, Texas

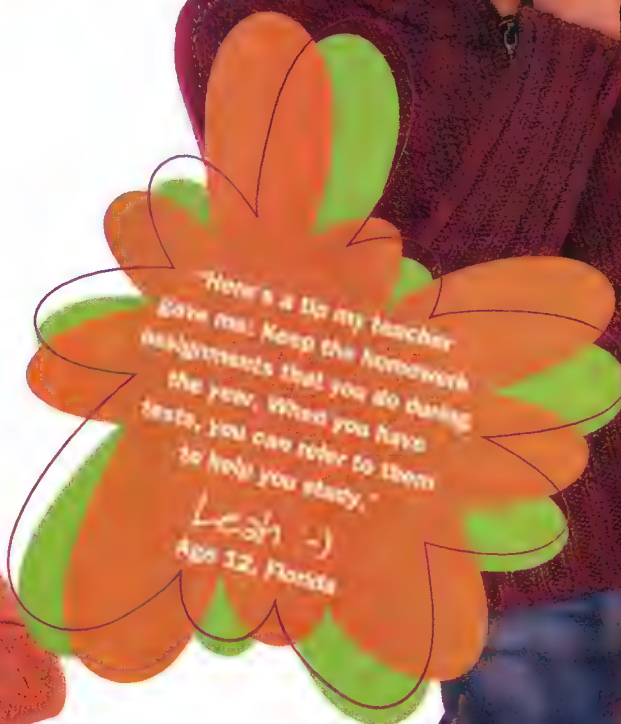


From the notebook you write in to the homework you do, try these tips for cute covers and successful studies, too!



Clever Reports

Present your hard work in a creative way. Cut a section off of a slide sheet protector (available at office supply stores). Attach it to a report cover using double-sided tape. Fill the pockets with drawings or photos that relate to your topic.



Line 'Em Up!

Cut strips of self-adhesive felt (available at craft stores) and stick them on a notebook cover. You can also cut stiffened felt into strips and glue the strips to the front of your notebook.



Make It Special

Potluck Lunch

Have your friends each bring a type of food such as fruit or crackers. At lunchtime, share everyone's "ideas"! Bon Appetit!

Petite Purses

Check out Tiny Totes by Basic Fun (available at discount stores). Put extra lunch money in these mini pouches and clip them onto your lunchbox.

Stuck on You

Put self-adhesive Velcro squares on a lunch bag and on the back of small patches. Attach patches to the bag, and change them depending on your mood! (Do not put in dishwasher.)

Joke-Go-Round

Play a silly game during lunch. One girl tells a joke. Everyone else must try to keep a straight face. The person to catch a smile first has to tell the next joke!

Shape Up

Glue colorful felt shapes (available at craft stores) onto a plain lunchbox.

Plain PB&J is *so* last year. Take a look at some new ways to liven up your lunch (and your lunchbox)!



Thirst First

Put a juice pouch in the freezer the night before school. Add it to your lunchbox before you leave

in the morning. Your lunch will stay cool and you'll have cold juice to drink!

Someone will accidentally call the teacher "Mom." Will it be you?

Someday you will sing in the school talent show and get discovered by a famous music producer.

Lucky Lunch

Hand out lunch fortunes to your friends. Turn to page 45 to find out how!

EZ Lunch

"If you are tired of regular lunches, try this! Pack a bowl (with a lid) of dry cereal. Buy a carton of milk at school and pour it into the bowl. Breakfast for lunch!"

Caitlin :-)

Age 11

Munch 'n' Crunch

"I invented Apple Peanut Butter Crunch: apple slices with peanut butter spread on top, sandwiched between two Ritz crackers. It's yummy!"

Allyson :-)

Age 9, Nebraska

Sweet Treat

"I like to make Ants on a Brick. Spread peanut butter on a graham cracker and sprinkle it with chocolate chips. It makes a great dessert."

Laura :-)

Age 12, Florida

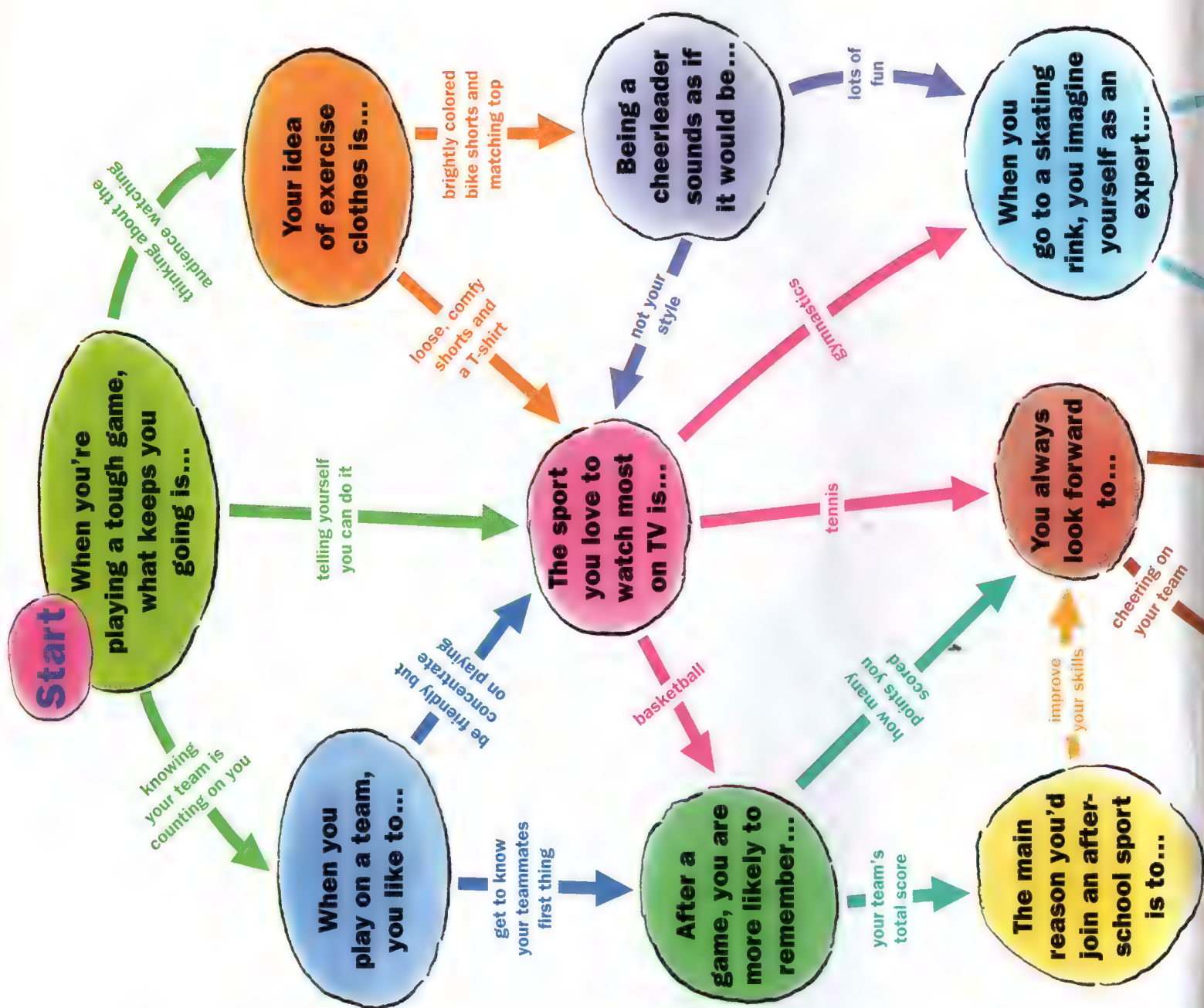
Nice Slice

Create an alternative sandwich sensation using P.B. Slices (available at some grocery and discount stores). Place a P.B. Slice on fruit leather. Roll them up together with the fruit leather on the outside. For dessert, put chocolate hazelnut spread on a P.B. Slice, roll it up, and enjoy. ★



What's Your

Are you born to perform, ready to go solo, or part of the team?

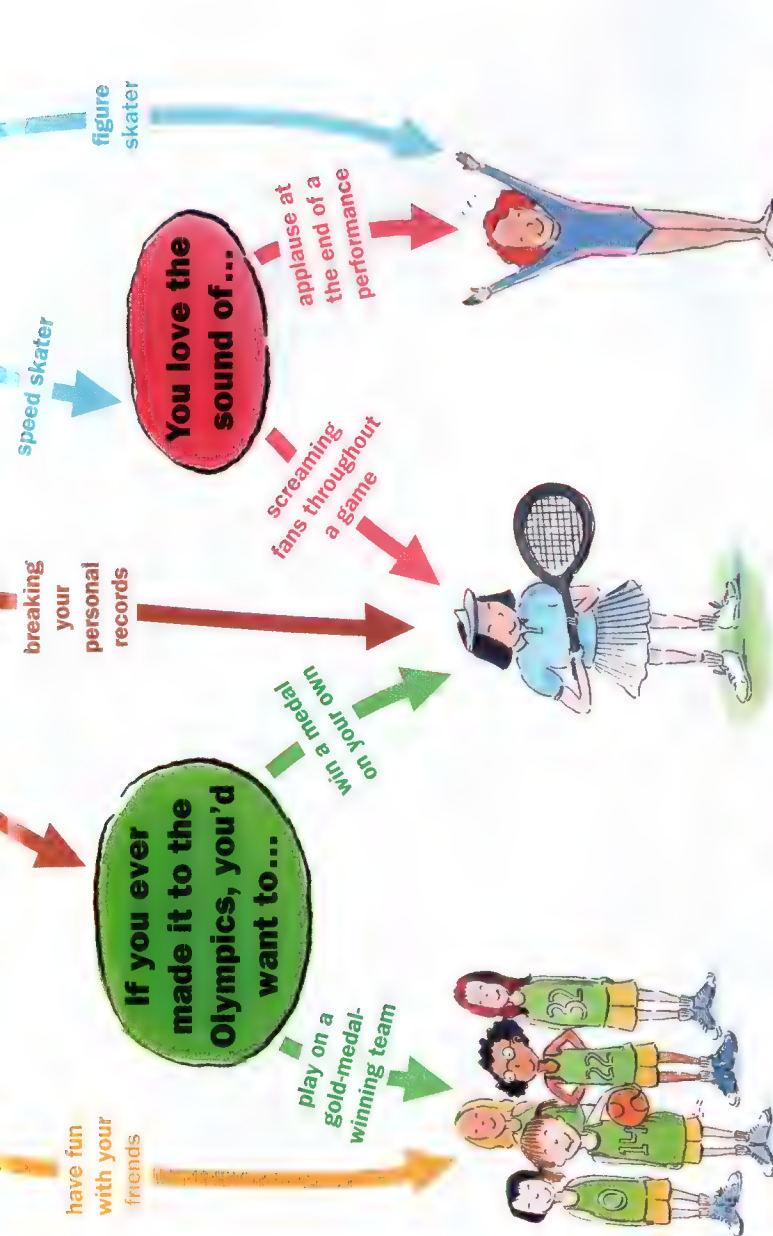




by Sarah Jane Brian

Sports Style?

Take this quiz to find out **what type of sport** may fit you best.



Go Team!

You get a boost when you play sports with other people, whether it's a formal team or just a bunch of friends. Team sports like volleyball, basketball, soccer, and softball are perfect for you. You'll also

have fun doing group activities like biking, hiking, and Rollerblading.



Soccer star
Brandi Chastain

Solo Act

No matter what sport you're playing, you focus on being the best you can be. You practice hard, and seeing your skills improve is a great reward for you. When it comes to competition, you may prefer to shine all on

your own. Try a sport like tennis, swimming, running, or rock climbing.



Tennis champ
Venus Williams

Born to Perform

You enjoy sports that involve grace, beauty, and self-expression. Since performing in front of an audience gives you a thrill, try dancing as well as sports like gymnastics, figure skating, and

synchronized swimming. ★



Super skater
Sarah Hughes

Photo credits on page 2.

From *The Quiz Book 2*, available in bookstores

Craft

DENIMANIA!

Give last year's jeans a fresh, new look!

BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

- For "Swirly Girl" put wax paper inside each pant leg to prevent paint from soaking through.
- Always follow the instructions on the packages of products that are designed for use on fabrics.
- Wash decorated jeans on gentle cycle only.

Note: All items are available at craft or fabric stores.

Swirly Girl

You will need:

- Pencil
- Paper
- Paintbrush
- Brushable fabric paint

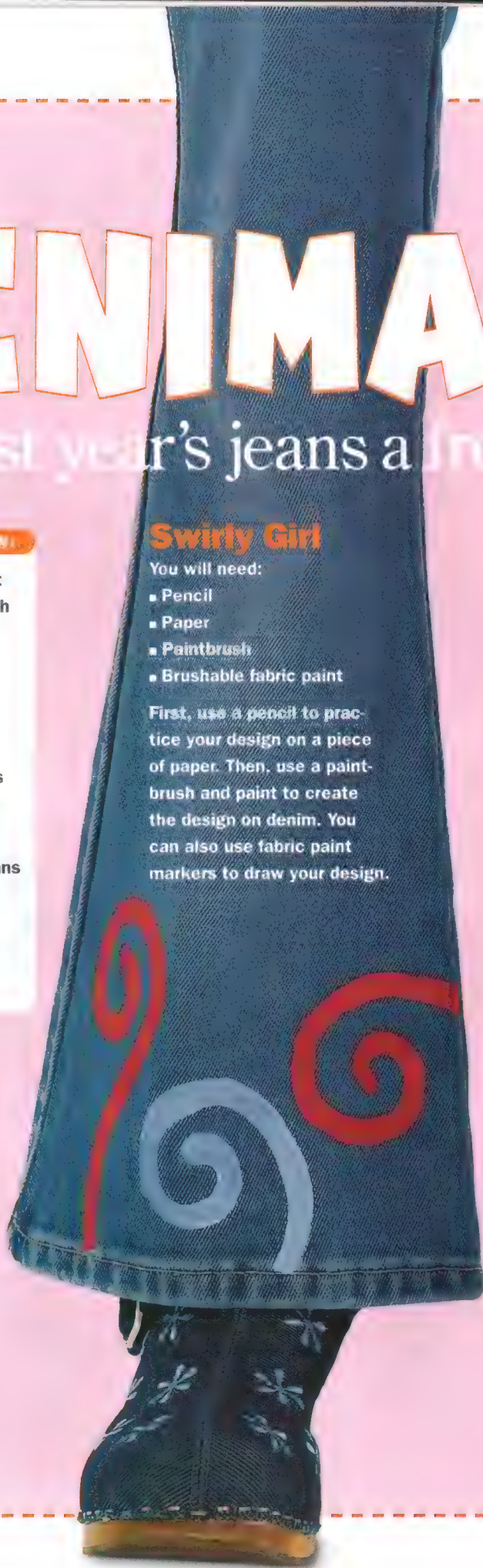
First, use a pencil to practice your design on a piece of paper. Then, use a paintbrush and paint to create the design on denim. You can also use fabric paint markers to draw your design.

Cute Cuffs

You will need:

- Fun pins

Roll up your jeans and secure funky pins on the cuffs to hold them in place.



Patch It Up

You will need:



An adult to help you

- Iron-on appliques or patches
- Iron

Lay out flowery appliques or cute patches in desired pattern. Have an adult iron them to the bottom of each pant leg. (If appliques or patches cannot be ironed on, then use Patch Attach glue.) Tip: Add extra sparkle to your jeans by applying fabric glitter spray.

Fun Fringe


You will need:



An adult to help you

- Washable marker (such as Crayola)
- Scissors
- Patch Attach glue
- Beaded trim
- Iron

1 Try on jeans and decide where you want to cut them. Using a washable marker, draw a line to mark where you will cut. Cut the jeans along the marker line.

2  Apply Patch Attach glue to the back of the trim and have an adult help you iron it onto your jeans. (Closely follow the directions on the Patch Attach bottle.) Cut off any denim hanging below the trim. ★

JEANS

Girls have loved wearing jeans for more than half a century.

Here's the history of their fashion passion!

In the 1800s, men wore denim pants for work, not for style. Then, in the 1930s, cowboy movies hit the big screen in a big way. The films' rugged stars wore jeans. By the 1940s, many people—including girls—started dressing in jeans and cowboy boots to copy their heroes' western look. Even so, stores and catalogs didn't sell jeans made just for girls until the mid-1940s. Girls wore those sturdy slacks for work or play only, never for school!

1948



By the 1960s, stores sold stylish girls' jeans made for leisure, not just work, though girls still weren't allowed to wear these denims to school. Early 1960s girls' jeans like these had a conservative, tapered look, but by the end of the decade, girls flipped for flares.

1964



Girls of the 1950s wore men's or boys' jeans cuffed mid-calf along with rolled white bobby socks and saddle shoes or penny loafers. This cute, boyish look was perfect for a sock hop!

1950s



1976

In the early 1970s, dress codes started to loosen up. Girls wore jeans everywhere—even to school. Many girls made their own fancy pants by patching bright fabrics or pieces of old jeans into the side seams of new ones to make super-stylish, super-wide bell-bottoms. Some girls embroidered designs on their denims. By the mid-1970s, stores sold embroidered and patchwork jeans like these to keep up with the do-it-yourself fashion trend.



1980

Jeans turned into a status symbol in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Girls longed for tight-fitting, high-priced designer jeans. Girls' Jordache jeans like these cost at least \$30 in 1980—that would be nearly \$65 today!



In the late 1980s and early 1990s, jeans makers let people get the look of well-worn denim without actually breaking in the jeans themselves. Labels boasted of "distressed" and "stonewashed" denim—and many jeans actually were washed with stones before they hit store shelves! These pretty jeans from 1990 were "acid washed."

1990



TODAY

Today's coolest jeans imitate styles from the past. Girls of 1970 wore low-riding flares almost exactly like the ones girls love now. The stylish stitching on modern jeans copies a 1970s look, too. But what's this fall's top denim trend? Cute, colored jeans like these! ★



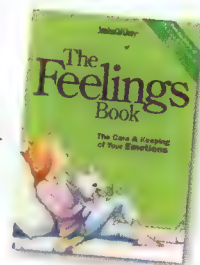
Credits on page 2

The Whole You

Dealing with Your Feelings

by Dr. Lynda Madison

Feelings can be complicated. Sometimes it may seem like you're on a **crazy ride**—up one minute and down the next. But you can learn to take charge. Take a **quiz** to find your emotional style. Answer **questions** to discover what's behind your reactions. Try the **tips** to learn how to relax when you're stressed.



Adapted from
The Feelings Book

What's Your Reaction?

Pick the reaction that is closest to the way you would respond.

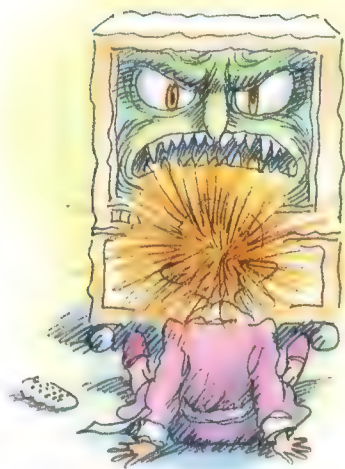
1. You are trying to study. Your brother keeps coming into your room, messing with your games. You aren't getting anything done! You:

- a.** scream at him to get out—NOW!
- b.** call your friend and tell her what a pain your brother is.
- c.** clench your jaw and try to ignore him.



2. Your teacher is passing back tests and pauses at your desk. When you open the paper, a big red mark shows that you failed. You:

- a.** pound your fist on your desk so loudly that half the class turns around.
- b.** check with everyone around you to see how they did.
- c.** slide down in your chair and then slink out of class as soon as you can.



3. You watch a scary movie after everyone else is in bed, and then see shadowy figures in the closet every time you open your eyes. You:

- a. burst out of the bedroom like a ghost is at your heels.
- b. wake your parents and tell them you can't sleep.
- c. lie there shivering for as long as it takes to go to sleep.

4. You open a big white envelope with your name on it and learn you won \$100 in a drawing contest! You:

- a. jump into the air and let out a whoop!
- b. call all the people you know and tell them the news.
- c. smile to yourself and head straight for the bank.



5. A friend blames you for something you didn't do. You decide to:

- a. tell her off right then and there.
- b. e-mail other friends after school to get their opinions.
- c. feel your temperature rise but keep your mouth shut.

6. The votes are in, and you lost the class election to the most popular kid in school. On the bus ride home, you:

- a. burst into tears on your best friend's shoulder.
- b. tell everyone what's wrong while you look for a tissue.
- c. hold it all in. Crying is for babies.



Answers 2 2

The Nuclear Reactor

If you had mostly **a** answers, you tend to wear your feelings on your sleeve—or anywhere else people can see them. It's great that you don't hold things in, but take care not to react too quickly and shut down communication with another person.

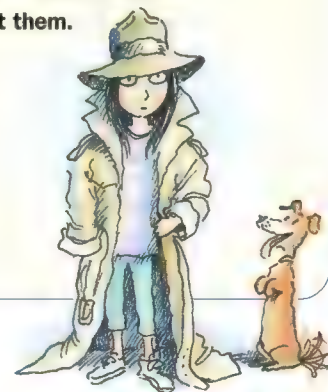


The Talker 3 1

If you had mostly **b** answers, you let your feelings out by being chatty. Good—at least they aren't just tumbling around inside of you. Talking to others can help you sort through what you are feeling. But be careful not to speak before you think, or you could say things you'll regret later.

The Private "I" 1 3

If you had mostly **c** answers, you may be great at solving problems by yourself, on your own schedule. Or you might be a very quiet or private person who does not want to burden others with your feelings. This can be fine, as long as you don't have a storm of emotions going on inside. If you do, you'll want to get your feelings out where you can take a good look at them.



Think It Through

When you find yourself angry or upset, you might have other hidden feelings, too. Answer these questions to find out what's going on inside your head—and your heart.



1. Your first reaction is important. How are you telling yourself that you feel? Fill in the blank.

"I feel so _____."
(feeling)

2. Your first response might be only a small part of what you really feel. Sometimes underneath the obvious feeling, you can be afraid, jealous, or sad. Sometimes you want and need attention and are angry when someone else doesn't see that. Think about why you're reacting the way you are.

Ask yourself:

"Why does this situation make me feel that way?"

3. See if another feeling describes your emotions better. Try other feelings words in this sentence:

"Could I be feeling a little _____, too?"
(feeling)

4. Make a list of all the words that describe how you feel. Think about why you feel that way.

"I feel _____ because."

I also feel a little _____ because _____.

And I even feel sort of _____.

because _____.

Figuring out how you *really* feel can help you understand yourself—and that means you can then act in a way that has the best chance of making you feel better.

Confused Ashamed Frustrated
Envious Sad Annoyed Embarrassed
Fearful Shy Guilty Anxious
Worried Hopeless Sorry



What Can You Do?

If your feelings are stressing you out, try these exercises to relax and stay focused.



Use Your Imagination

Close your eyes and visualize a favorite calm, relaxing place. Feel as though you are there, with its sights, sounds, and smells. Try repeating a lulling phrase to yourself, like "Seagulls, sand, and surf."

Keep It Up!

Every experience you have, and the way you feel about it, can teach you something about yourself and help you grow.



Take time to listen to your feelings and share them with others the best way you know how. The better you become at understanding and expressing your feelings, the more you will enjoy being you! ★

Flex It

When you feel tense, you may tighten your muscles without even noticing. Practice seeing how different muscles feel when they are tense. Tighten the muscles in your feet for 10 seconds, then relax them. Do the same thing with the muscles in your calves, rear end, back, arms, hands, shoulders, neck, and face.



Move It

Good news: exercise is a great way to get your mind off things. Great news: jogging, swimming, or playing a vigorous sport has also been shown to get good chemicals coursing through your brain, which can help you feel better.

Take Three

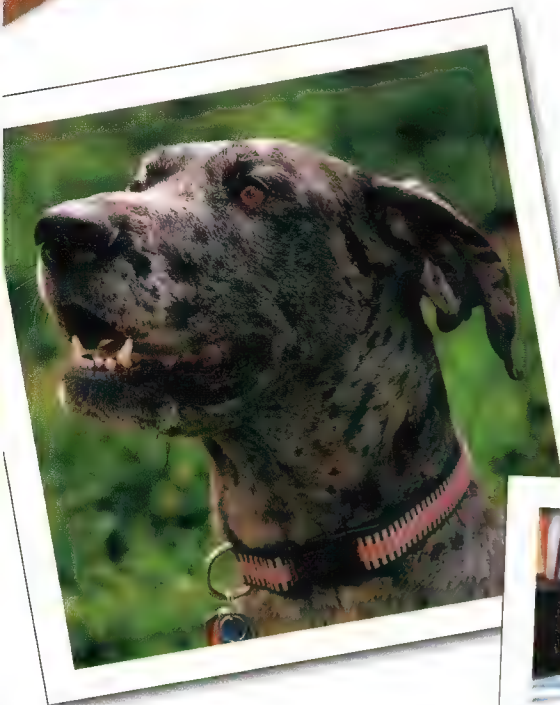
When you feel anxious, take in a long, slow breath through your nose. Count to three as you breathe in, then hold your breath for three seconds. Now breathe out, counting to three again. Repeat three times and notice how much calmer you feel.

Catch the Rhythm

Music can soothe or excite you, depending on its rhythm and words. Decide what you need and play songs that will help you relax or distract you from your troubles by getting you humming or dancing along.

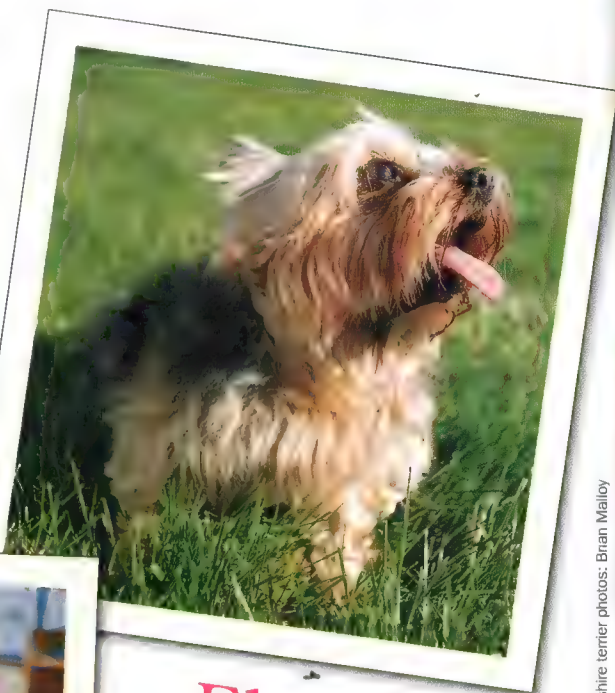
Lucky Dogs!

It's hard to imagine, but once no one wanted these cute canines. Meet the girls whose caring, trust, and love changed the dogs' lives.



Anya, an abused Great Dane, never lived indoors until Chelsea and Shaina opened their home to the lovable dog.

Maggie was sick and starving before a kind teacher gave her love and a good home. Today, with help from a girl named Cassidy, Maggie shares the love she's received.



Electra probably wouldn't have lived if Allison and her mom hadn't made the epileptic dog a part of their family.





Gentle Giants

Not long ago, Anya, a Great Dane, lived in a cold, lonely doghouse in her owner's backyard. When Anya's owner gave her up because she could no longer afford to feed the hungry dog, Chelsea (left) and Shaina B. and their family let Anya into their home—and their hearts.

Anya isn't the first dog to find shelter with Shaina, 13, and Chelsea, 11. About three years ago, the girls' beloved pet Great Dane inspired them to start helping other dogs in need. Shaina and Chelsea's mom works with a Great Dane rescue group to find good, permanent homes for the animals that stay with the family.

Unfortunately, Anya's story is not unusual. Many of the 20 or more dogs that spend time in Chelsea and Shaina's Pennsylvania home each year have been hurt by their former owners. "If a dog has been abused," explains Chelsea, "you can't even put your hand above her head to pet her, because she'll think you're going to hit her." Helping homeless Great Danes "lets you know how the world works," says Shaina. "People aren't always nice."

In spite of her past, Anya loves to be around people. The energetic dog's friendliness shows that abused animals can learn to love people instead of fearing them. Plus, Anya proves that Great Danes have big hearts to match their big size. "These dogs are sweet, really nice," says Chelsea. "They make good pillows, too," Shaina chimes in.

Taking care of gigantic dogs is a gigantic responsibility. But the girls know that teaching Great Danes how to behave around people can save the dogs' lives. And in the process, Shaina and Chelsea get to make friends with a lot of terrific animals. "It's hard, seeing the dogs go to their new homes...and sometimes just putting up with them," says Shaina, "but it's rewarding, knowing you can help!"



Hug Therapy

Maggie, a Pomeranian, was about a year old when her careless owner left her alone for days. Then Maggie's owner returned and punished the pup for the mess she'd made while he was gone. When Mrs. Fleet, a teacher and dog lover, finally rescued Maggie from the abusive owner, the little dog was dirty, sick, and scared.

Cassidy E., one of Mrs. Fleet's students, was terrified of dogs when she first met Maggie. The Iowa girl never dreamed she'd enjoy spending all day, every day with dogs! Then Cassidy started work on a very special school project—training Maggie and two other dogs to visit kids in hospitals and schools. Cassidy and Maggie connected almost instantly. Loving, gentle Maggie helped Cassidy get over her fear of dogs.

Cassidy loves training Maggie for her therapy work. Perhaps that's because she knows firsthand just how wonderful it is to get a visit from a therapy dog. Cassidy, 14, has cystic fibrosis, an illness that makes it hard for her to breathe and sometimes causes her to get serious lung infections. When Cassidy's in the hospital, Mrs. Fleet brings Maggie and the other dogs to visit her. Cassidy truly appreciates cuddling with her canine pals. "It's medicine for the heart," Mrs. Fleet explains.

Cassidy knows that Maggie has changed her life for the better. Working with Maggie to comfort sick kids "makes me feel really proud of myself," Cassidy says. "I used to not want to go to school, but now that the dogs are there, I really like to go. I love Maggie. She and I trust each other."



Photo: Kristin K. Brown. Courtesy: The Humane Society of the United States

A Friend in Need

Electra, a Yorkshire terrier, needed a new home. But chances were slim that she'd find one. Electra has epilepsy, an illness that causes her to shake with seizures from time to time. She requires special medicine and a lot of extra attention, and her owner could no longer care for her. Who would be willing to give a sick dog like Electra a second chance at life?

Allison S. first heard about Electra from her mom, a vet. Allison was facing tough times herself—her parents had recently divorced. The Wisconsin girl and her mom decided they could use a friend like Electra.

It didn't take long for Allison and Electra to grow close. Soon Electra slept on Allison's bed every night. "She keeps me company," says Allison, 10. "If the lights are all off and I get scared, she's right there to greet me." Today the two friends love to play together at the park or even just in Allison's backyard wading pool on a hot summer day.

When Allison hurt her eye two summers ago, Electra got the chance to prove just how much she cares for her owner. After surgery, Allison had to wear an eye patch and stay in bed. Her little dog kept her company the whole time. Then last year, Electra lost one of her eyes to

a medical problem common in Yorkies. Allison knew exactly how to comfort her best friend. Allison stayed with her dog, just petting her and giving her love, as Electra adjusted to life with one eye. Now Allison and Electra know they can always count on each other, no matter what.

Electra does need more attention and care than most pets. And she can't run and jump like a puppy. But to Allison, Electra's love is worth the extra effort. "I know that Electra has special needs," Allison explains, "but that makes her really special to me." ★

Are you a super sleuth?
See if you can solve these
three mini mysteries.
Read each short story and
try to figure it out. For the
answers, look inside the flap
between pages 36 and 37.

The Candy Thieves Mystery

by Rick Walton

Two mysterious masked monsters are stealing candy from kids. Alisha solves the case—can you?

“Trick or treat!”

“What cute witches!” said Mrs. Evans as she dropped candy into Sarah’s and Alisha’s bags.



Actually, only eight-year-old Sarah was a witch. Her cousin, Alisha, who was three years older, was a black cat, but the girls didn’t want to correct their elderly neighbor.

“Thank you, Mrs. Evans,” the two girls said together. Then they turned and headed off to the next house.

It was a cool Halloween night. The moon was full and bright, and the air was still—no wind, no breeze, nothing. All that floated through the air were the happy sounds of excited voices and hurrying feet of pirates and princesses and superheroes.

Then, down the street, came a whoosh. Two demons rode through the darkness, racing their bikes alongside the trick-or-treaters, grabbing as many bags as they could get their hands on. And then they sped off into the darkness.



Little kids, now candyless, began to cry.

Alisha and Sarah still had their candy, but they had seen the whole thing and were quite shaken up. Alisha stomped her foot. “They can’t do that! That’s mean! Let’s get ‘em!”

“They’re bigger than we are,” said Sarah, “and moving fast.”

“They can’t ride forever,” said Alisha. She gathered up the other trick-or-treaters, helped dry tears, gave a pep talk, and asked what each kid saw. The only thing everyone agreed on was that the



thieves were wearing monster masks. Alisha and Sarah led the group to look for the thieves.



Within the next two blocks, the girls found two things. The first was a hat, lying in the street. Alisha picked it up and put it on her head. "Look! I'm the cat in the hat!" she said.

The second was Patrick, Sarah's big brother. He was 17 years old and heading to a party. When the girls told him of the crime, he said he'd be happy to help them look.



The costumed crowd went up one street and down another, until...

"Look!" said a boy dressed as a skeleton. He pointed far ahead at two boys sitting under a tree. From a distance it looked as if they were eating candy.

Patrick whispered to the group, "Sarah, Alisha, and I will sneak up on the boys. The rest of you stay here. They might not be the thieves, but if they are, we don't want to scare them away."

The two boys flinched as Patrick, Sarah, and Alisha suddenly stood over them.

One of the boys smiled at Alisha. "Hey, you found my hat," he said. "Been looking for it. Wind blew it off my head."

"Can you prove it's yours?" Alisha asked.

"Says 'Jack' inside," he said.

Alisha looked. Inside the hat the name "Jack" was written in black magic marker. She handed the hat to the boy.

"Now, did you just come to give me back my hat, or was

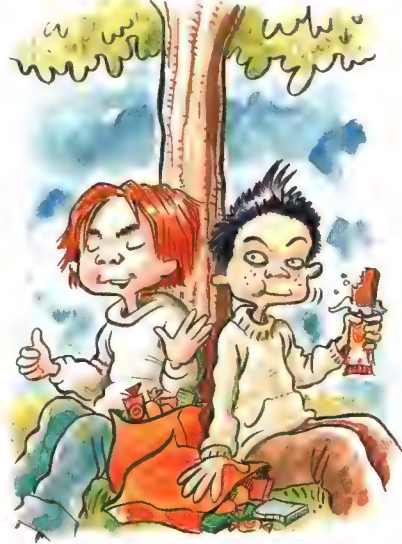


there something else?" asked Jack.

Patrick waved to the rest of the kids. They came forward and surrounded the two boys.

"Two people wearing monster masks have been racing bikes around and grabbing candy from little kids," said Patrick. "Those trick-or-treat bags of yours are pretty full." He pointed to the bulging pillowcases the boys had. "Sure there isn't any little kids' candy in there?"

"We didn't take anyone's candy," said one of the boys. "We came by this candy fair and square, by trick-or-treating. We've been all over the city. That's why our bags are full."



"Besides, we couldn't be the bag stealers," said Jack. "Do you see our bikes? No. That's because we've been walking, not riding."

"Oh, but they have been riding," said Alisha.

All eyes turned to her. "What?" said Patrick. "How do you know?"

How did Alisha know?



The Case of the Lucky Cleats

by Elizabeth McDavid Jones, author of
The Night Flyers and *Mystery on Skull Island*

It looks like Whitney's best friend stole her lucky soccer gear. But looks can be deceiving.

Whitney pulled her uniform and soccer cleats out of her gym bag. The clamor in the locker room was louder than usual, and Whitney's pregame butterflies were flapping harder, too. It was a big game for Clairmont's sixth-grade girls' soccer team: their match with rival middle school C.H. Wicker.

Spying a broken shoelace on one of her cleats, Whitney dug through her bag for extra laces. At the plunk of a gym bag on the bench, she looked up. Her friend Cierra was grinning at her. Whitney smiled

back. "In the wrong locker room, aren't you?"

"Can't a girl wish her best friend luck?" said Cierra, "even if she is the enemy?" She smiled and said, "Looks like you broke a shoelace."

"Yeah. I thought I put laces in my bag. Guess not."

"Your coach probably has extras. Those old cleats still fit?" asked Cierra.



"I make 'em fit. Remember that game last year when I couldn't find them? I didn't score once!"

"Oh, yeah. Has your little brother outgrown his throwing-cleats-down-the-laundry-chute stage?"

Whitney grimaced. "Now he's into flushing things down the toilet. But I'm keeping my dear cleats away from him." She caressed them like babies. "I'll never play again without my lucky cleats." Then, with mock seriousness, Whitney tucked each shoe into her gym bag, covered them with a towel, and crooned an off-key lullaby.



Cierra, doubled over laughing, could barely return Megan's and Brinn's greetings when they walked in during Whitney's song. Wiping away tears, Cierra said, "I wish we were all on the same team again."

"Maybe the four of us will make the All-District team," said Megan. "Their coaches are scouting this game, you know."

"Get real," said Brinn. "They'll be watching Whitney. She's our lead scorer, our star."

"We've all got a shot," said Whitney.

"Maybe," Cierra said. "But I do wish we had a forward like Whitney on our team. We've lost more games than we've won. Any chance I could convince you to fake a sprained ankle, Whitney?"



Brinn frowned. "Is that why you came in, Cierra? To talk Whitney into throwing the game?"

"Take it easy, Brinn," said Whitney. "She was kidding. Weren't you, Cierra?"

"You bet," said Cierra. "Listen, I'd better go. Good luck, guys—but not too good!"

Whitney chuckled and started changing. Then she remembered the broken shoelace. "I'll meet you on the field," she told Brinn and Megan. In her stocking feet, Whitney padded down the hall to Coach's office. When she

returned to the locker room, everyone was gone—and so were her lucky cleats!

Coach lent Whitney cleats, but she played miserably, and Clairmont lost.



After the game, Whitney sat brooding, oblivious to the locker-room chatter. When Megan and Brinn tried to console her, she confessed what was bothering her: Cierra, she believed, had sneaked in while she was gone and made off with her cleats.

"Why would Cierra pull such a dirty trick?" Megan asked. "She's your best friend!"

"Was," said Whitney. "She knew I'd play rotten without those cleats. And her team was desperate to win."

"You thought she was kidding," said Brinn, tugging at a knot in her shoelace. "Darn," she said when the lace snapped. "Mine broke, too, Whitney. Guess it's contagious.



Are you going to confront Cierra?"

Whitney pulled at her lip, thinking. "Maybe I'll talk it over with Coach," she said. Then she went to tell Coach who snatched her cleats.

Who was the culprit?

The African Mystery

by Rick Walton

Gwen thinks Amy skimped on her share of their group project. Is Gwen just making a wild guess?



"Amy? Where are you, Amy?" Gwen sang out. Mira had shown up at Gwen's house on time—half an hour ago—to go through their presentations on Africa. The girls wanted to do a good job, because they were going to get an individual grade and a group grade, but there was no sign of their partner Amy.

"Maybe Amy went to Africa to do firsthand research," said Mira.

Gwen laughed. "I'll call her." She dialed Amy's number. The phone rang four times before Amy picked up.



"Hello?" she said. In the background Gwen heard music, rockets, and other sounds that she recognized as coming from a game.

"Uh, Amy? It's Gwen. Did you forget something?"

"Oh! Gwen, I'm sorry," said Amy. "I'll grab my stuff and I'll be right there."

Seven minutes later Amy showed up, panting and dragging her backpack.

"O.K.," said Gwen, "let's get started. First, some mood music." She switched on a tape player. Soft African music began to play. "Now I can begin. African people: More than six hundred million people live in



Africa. They speak eight hundred to seventeen hundred different languages."

"Wow," said Mira, "an African person can speak that many languages? That's a lot!" She smiled at Gwen.

"O.K.," said Gwen, "I'll change it to 'There are between eight hundred and seventeen hundred different African languages.' Better?"

"Better," said Mira and Amy in unison.

Gwen continued her presentation. As she spoke, she uncovered a bowl



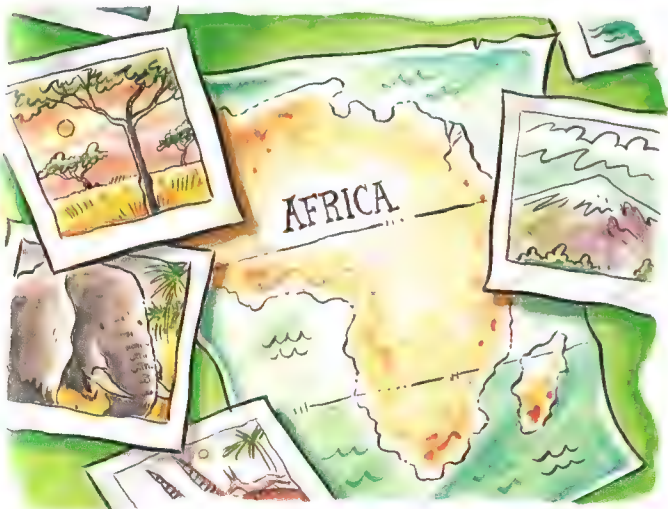
and a plate on the table.

"Great," said Amy, "you invited us to dinner!"

"Sweet potatoes and peanuts," said Gwen with a smile, "two of Africa's staple crops. I think people will like our presentation better if we feed them. I want us to get an A."

Then it was Mira's turn. "I didn't bring food, but I did bring visual aids," she said. As she talked about the African landscape, she showed a large hand-drawn map of the continent that she had made, as well as many photos of Africa's beaches, lakes, mountains, and rivers.

When Mira finished, she and Gwen turned to Amy. "Your turn," Gwen said. "Hit it."



"The animals of Africa," Amy said. "There are lots and lots of interesting animals in Africa, like crocodiles and hippopotamuses and elephants." As she spoke, she took stuffed animals out of her backpack. "And there are tigers and lions roaming the jungle. The male lions hunt for food and bring it home to the female lions. There are lots of animals for the lions to chase, such as zebras, giraffes, buffaloes, antelopes, and ostriches."

"That's enough, Amy," said Gwen. "You didn't do any research, did you?"

Amy looked at Gwen open-mouthed, then looked down at the floor. "How did you know?" asked Amy.

How did Gwen know?





Tricky Pix 2



In our March/April issue, we showed you how to take funny photos. We couldn't believe our eyes when we saw your best shots!



Lucy K., Laura S., and
Katie A., Nebraska



Melody M. and Erin A., California



Kelsey R., Kristen K.,
and Aubrey A., Utah



Sarah S. and Civry M., Massachusetts



Megan R. and Shaylagh M.,
New Hampshire



Kelly K. and Emily L., Michigan



Kaitlyn G., Texas



Emily K. and
Lizzy D., Kansas



Gabrielle M., California

How did they do this
any shot? They got
helped by the fact that
they were all very close
together about the
same time. 

The Giggle Gang



Sweet Tooth Sleuth

After Anna, Haley, and Tessa returned from trick-or-treating, they discovered that each one of them had missed a different house. Can you figure out which house each girl skipped?



ANNA



HALEY



TESSA

What did the vampire say when he bit into a millionaire's neck? "Too rich for my blood."

Why did Dracula attack a thief? He wanted to take a bite out of crime.

How do witches tell time? They wear witchwatches.

What happened to the girl who showed up at the ghost's get together?

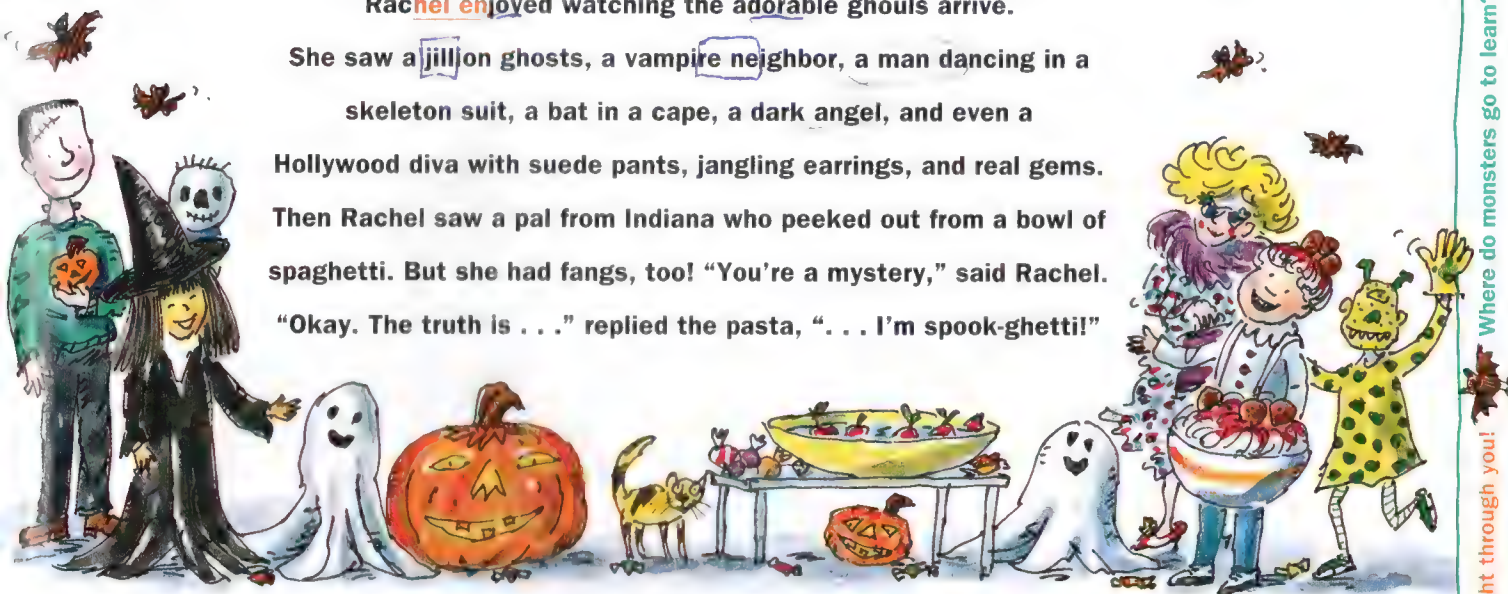
All answers on page 42.

Ghoulish Girls

Twenty-two girls showed up at Rachel's Halloween party. To find their names, look in the middle of words or put the end of one word with the beginning of the next.

Rachel enjoyed watching the adorable ghouls arrive.

She saw a jillion ghosts, a vampire neighbor, a man dancing in a skeleton suit, a bat in a cape, a dark angel, and even a Hollywood diva with suede pants, jangling earrings, and real gems. Then Rachel saw a pal from Indiana who peeked out from a bowl of spaghetti. But she had fangs, too! "You're a mystery," said Rachel. "Okay. The truth is . . ." replied the pasta, ". . . I'm spook-ghetti!"



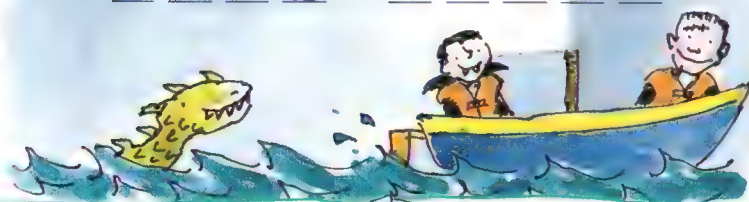
AG Code

Where did Frankenstein and Dracula go on vacation?



S A I L I N G O N

L A K E E E R I E



Tic Tac Total!

Take turns placing Xs or Os on any square. The first one to make a tic-tac-toe or to total 100 exactly wins!

5	20	45
30	40	35
10	15	20



What did the road sign say on the way to the mummy's tomb? Dead ahead.

Where do monsters go to learn? They go to ghouls! Mom ghost: Did you break that lamp? Girl ghost: No. Mom ghost: Don't lie. I can see right through you!

The Giggle Gang

Pumpkin Patch

This patch is packed with pumpkins!
How many do you count?



Penny Plays

Grab a pal and some pennies and try these dinky dares!

Place 20 pennies on a table. Take turns picking up one, two, or three pennies. The player who is forced to pick up the last penny loses!



Take turns placing one penny on top of another to make a stack. Keep going until one of you knocks over the stack. Don't straighten the pennies as you go!

Answer Box



The buzzword, hulaabaloo, is used on page 48.
Pumpkin Patch: We counted 52 pumpkins!



Sweet Tooth Sleuth: Anna missed house 6; Haley skipped house 4; Tessa forgot house 11.
Ghoulish Girls: We found at least 22: Helen, Joy, Dora, Jill, Ava, Irene, Amanda, Gina, Tina, Ada, Angela, Eve, Holly, Sue, Jan, Andrea, Elsa, Diana, Hope, Amy, Kay, Ruth
AG Code: Sailing on Lake Erie issue.
Behind the Scenes: Nick appeared in "Summer Night Magic" in the July/August 2001 issue.

What's a sea monster's favorite trick-or-treat candy? Saltwater taffy.

Why do ghosts come out at night? Their sheets are drying on the clothesline during the day.

What do Hawaiians celebrate at the end of October? Hulaween.

What games do monsters play at slumber parties? Hide-and-Shriek and Truth or Scare.

What do daddy vampires say to baby vampires before bed? "Good night. Sleep tight. Don't bite the bedbugs."

Who's That Girl?

Here's an American girl of yesterday. Read the clues about her and guess who she is now.



Clue 1

On Halloween, a neighbor's house was my favorite spooky spot. Once inside, I'd find a haunted maze with chills at every turn. As a girl, those frightful tricks were a treat!



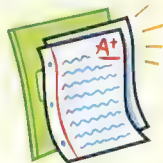
Clue 2

A rodeo was rip-roaring fun to a Texas girl like me. I never missed the amazing barbeque dinners, the cattle-roping contests, or the country music. But my favorite? The hilarious pig races!



Clue 3

In fourth grade, I was thrilled to get a part in our community play, even if I had only one line. Performing in *Annie Oakley* sure helped to shoot down my shyness.



Clue 4

My story about a woman who cares for motherless children on the prairie caught the eye of my teacher. She encouraged me to write more, and I let my imagination explore other times and places.



Here I am at age nine.



Clue 5

To teach me proper manners, my parents held formal family dinners. We dressed up, sat in the dining room, and used our finest china. We did *not* put our elbows on the table!

Take a guess!

When this American girl grew up, she became:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> an actress | <input type="checkbox"/> a pro rodeo rider |
| <input type="checkbox"/> an etiquette expert | <input type="checkbox"/> an author |

Turn the page and find out if you're right!

She's Alexis Bledel



Alexis with TV mom
Lauren Graham

Actress Alexis Bledel grew up a Texas girl, but today she's a "Gilmore Girl," too! At 20, Alexis plays straight-A, over-achiever Rory, whose friendly relationship with her mom, Lorelai, is the heart of TV's popular *Gilmore Girls*.

Just like Rory and Lorelai, Alexis and her mom are close. "My mom put me in every after-school activity to help me overcome my shyness," says Alexis. "I didn't know if I wanted to

be a dancer or a singer, but I knew I wanted to be a performer!"

At eight, Alexis started acting in a local theater group. She began modeling at 14, which led to jobs in New York, Japan, and Europe. When *Gilmore Girls* premiered in 2000,

Alexis became a television star. And this fall she makes her film debut in *Tuck Everlasting*.

For the movie's 1880 setting, Alexis wore a snug corset and two other layers under her dress, plus a coat and hat. "People from that time put on a crazy amount of stuff," explains Alexis, who plays Winnie Foster, a teenage girl with a mysterious secret. "But it was really beautiful once we were all set."



Dressed up for *Tuck Everlasting*

Stepping back in time makes acting fun, and her own memories help make scenes come alive, too. In *Gilmore Girls*, when Rory joins her grandparents for weekly formal dinners, Alexis's good table manners come in handy!

Like Rory on TV, Alexis can thank her mom for teaching her important lessons. She says, "My mom is always my best ally." ★

Alexis's advice to American girls:

"Worry less about the things that you can't control and focus on things you can. Let things go, and you'll have 50 percent less stress in your life!"

Alexis Bledel

You can e-mail Alexis at:
gilmoregirls@talk.thewb.com.

Funny Fortunes

Laugh it up at lunch! Turn the page for directions.

Beware! There is a pop quiz coming soon.

A hidden talent for climbing ropes will earn you an A in gym class.

Someday your favorite teacher will name her cat after you.

A friend will ask you to trade lunches. Do not give in to temptation.

The cafeteria will serve Tuna Surprise on Wednesday. It will surprise you, all right, but not in a good way.

You will soon take a long journey by foot. It will start tomorrow morning when you miss the bus.

You will accidentally wear your least-favorite shirt on school picture day.

Someone will accidentally call a teacher "Mom." Will it be you?

And the winner of the award for the best book report ever will be...you!

The good news is that you will score a point during the big game. The bad news is that it will be against your own team!

Someday you will sing in the school talent show and get discovered by a famous music producer.

Someday you will be the principal of your school.

A dog really *will* eat your homework, but your teacher won't believe you.

You are forgetting something important right this very second. What could it be?

Someone special will treat you to a carton of milk at lunch.

Watch out! There is a number 3 pencil in your backpack. Don't use it to take any tests.

You could be the best tuba player ever, but you'll never know because you didn't join Band.

Someday one of the notebooks you've doodled on will end up in an art museum.

Travel is in your future. Don't get too excited, though—it's just a field trip.

You will run into your teacher buying sauerkraut at the store.

There will be a fire drill on Friday. Are you ready?

Someday you will find a cure for cooties.

Carefully cut along the dotted lines.
Fold the slips in half, and put them in a bag.
Let each friend choose one
and read it out loud. ★

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HELP!

Dear American Girl,

My best bud and I are running for class president against each other! My friend wants to win really badly, but so do I! How can I win without having my bud be super mad at me?

Want to win

How will you feel if your friend wins? Disappointed, probably, but not mad at her for winning. She'll most likely feel the same way if you win. But you'd better believe she will get mad if you say negative things about her to make yourself look better. Run for prez by selling your strengths, not your friend's weaknesses. If she does the same, your friendship should survive, no matter who wins.



Dear American Girl,

My birthday is September 11. It makes me sad when I watch the news and they talk about what happened on my birthday. How can I stop feeling sad?

Worst Birthday

You'll always feel sad about the tragedies. But you might feel better knowing that more than 940 girls



who read AG share your birthday, including Nicole W. on page 4, Karen K. on page 8, and Cindy A. on page 49. Even though terrible things happened that day, it's O.K. to celebrate your birthday. This year, you might want to pick a different date to throw a party. On September 11, turn off the news, do something you love, and have the happiest birthday you can.



Dear American Girl,

I am the benchwarmer in volleyball! I have been on the sidelines from day one. I haven't even gotten a chance to show I'm good. How do I get my coach to put me in?

Benchwarmer

Talk to your coach. Be positive, and let her know what you want.

Say, "I think I'm a good player, but I'd like to be even better, and I'd really like to get some game time. What do you think I need to work on the most?" Then take your coach's advice. Put your heart into practice, and cheer for your teammates at games. If your coach sees that you're a dedicated player, you'll be in the game in no time.



Dear American Girl,

At school, I get made fun of because of my clothes. My family is poor and we can't afford good clothes. It's depressing. What should I do?

Worn out

You know that it's what's on the inside that really matters about a person, not how much money she has. But you also know it really hurts to be teased. Try not to take these mean kids' comments to heart. The next time someone teases you, say, "I would wear nice clothes like yours if I could, but I can't, so leave me alone." Then walk away knowing that you are a great person, even if you don't have good clothes.

MORE HELP!

Dear American Girl,

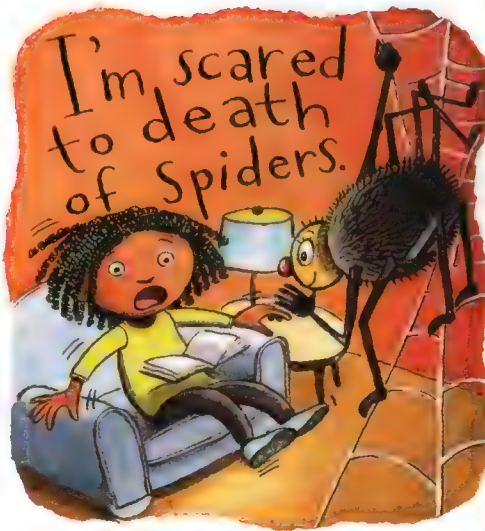
I'm scared to death of spiders. I've tried to learn more about them, but I find out freaky stuff, like that they lay eggs. I know that spiders eat bugs, but I'd rather have the bugs.
Terrorized by Arachnids

Spiders seem spooky, but the ones in your house aren't likely to hurt you. So if you see one, stay calm, and name it. Think, "Ooh, look at the lovely web Lillian is making!" You might find yourself giggling instead of screaming. And be sure to read *Charlotte's Web* by E. B. White. You'll never look at spiders the same way again!



Dear American Girl,

My friend and I made a deal that we would give each other the best score on every assignment that our teacher let us grade. But when I got to grade my friend's paper, I didn't think her work earned the highest score. I gave her the best score anyway, because I wanted to keep my end of the deal. Help!
Deal Maker



You may think you're keeping your end of the deal, but you're really letting down your friend, your teacher—and yourself. By giving each other automatic good grades, you and your friend will never have a chance to learn from your mistakes. You're also cheating, plain and simple. Tell your friend that your deal is off.



Dear American Girl,

I have five younger siblings. Every day they come into my room and cause a hullabaloo. They take things and lose or destroy them. My sister jumps on the bed singing at the top of her lungs! Please help me!
Totally Annoyed
With a little creative thinking, you can get things under control.

Put your good stuff high up out of reach. Find things your sibs can play with, and put them in a special toy box. Your sibs look up to you, so let them spend a little time in your room. But tell them that if they get too loud or crazy, they'll have to leave. If things don't improve, talk to Mom. Good luck!



Advice from You

"Whenever you're nervous about speaking in front of your classmates, and the old habits show up—such as chattering teeth and saying 'um' over and over—try this tip. Use your body to express yourself. Try pointing to stress something you say. That way you'll get rid of nervous energy."

Hailey B.
Age 13, Texas

Need advice? Got advice? Write:
Help!

AmericanGirl

8400 Fairway Place
Middleton, WI 53562

We asked cover models Peanut and Alexa a few questions. Here's what they had to say:

How old are you?

Peanut: 5

Alexa: 11

What is your favorite article of clothing?

Peanut: sunglasses

Alexa: jeans

What is your favorite sport?

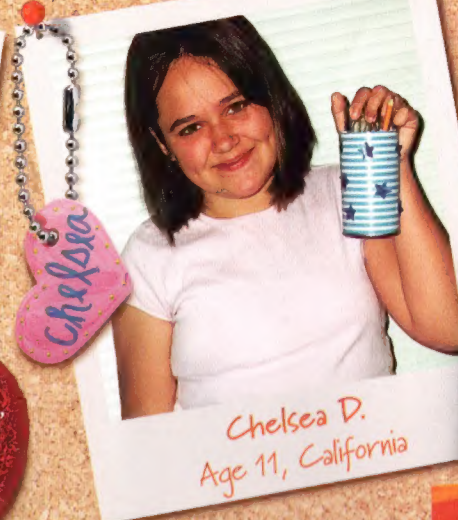
Peanut: fetch

Alexa: cheerleading

Who is your favorite celebrity?

Peanut: Lassie

Alexa: Kirsten Dunst



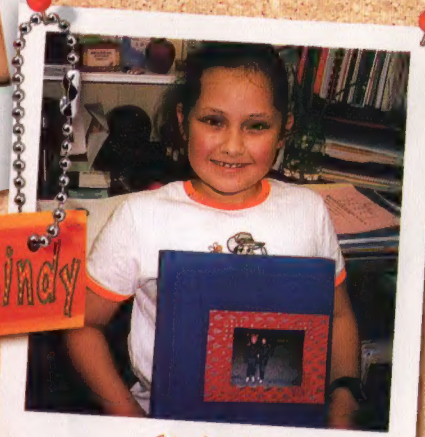
Chelsea

Chelsea D.
Age 11, California

Go to "Behind the Scenes" at americangirl.com to find out more about what happened at our cover photo shoot.

Every issue we ask girls like you to test the crafts to make sure they are fun and easy. Check out what "Make It Great" testers created!

Go to "Behind the Scenes" at americangirl.com for more ways to decorate your binders.



Cindy

Cindy A.
Age 11, Wisconsin

Sometimes story ideas come from our own experiences. Meet four staff members' rescued dogs that inspired "Lucky Dogs!" One of these dogs has appeared in a 2001 issue of AG. Can you find him? Answer on page 42.

Behind the Scenes

From furry friends to fall trends, take a look at the making of this issue!

While we were researching blue jeans from long ago, we came across some really funny items in a 1976 catalog. Look at what girls like you used to wear!



Nick



Apello



Jake



Ranger

5 Fun Trends This Fall:

- 1 Faux fur
- 2 Jean jackets
- 3 Appliqués
- 4 Pom-pom fringe
- 5 Colored denim

Find each trend in this issue!



For more Behind the Scenes scoop, check out americangirl.com.

Your opinion counts!

Tell us what you like about Behind the Scenes. Is there anything you would like to know about what goes on in the making of an issue? Write to us at the address on page 2.

Fiction Contest Winners

Two super stories
written by girls like you!



Goofy Gifts

Readers share their true tales of
wacky holiday presents.

Table Talk

Cute conversation starters to try
at any holiday dinner

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Find your fortune in
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washing machine!

Pass the Turkey

A silly Thanksgiving board game
to play with your family

Christmas Crafts

One-of-a-kind presents that are
easy to make and fun to give!

Love Ya Like a Sis

Meet two girls who became friends—
and family.



Home Sweet Home

Make a gingerbread house
that looks good enough to eat!





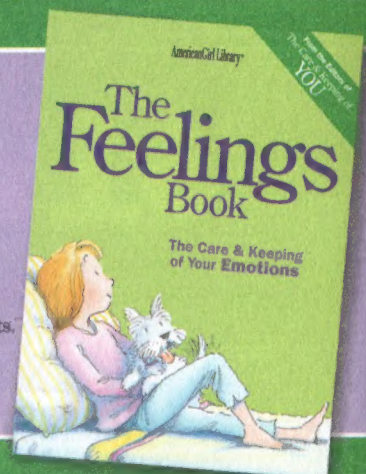
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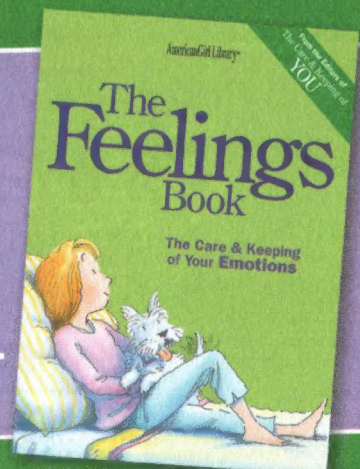
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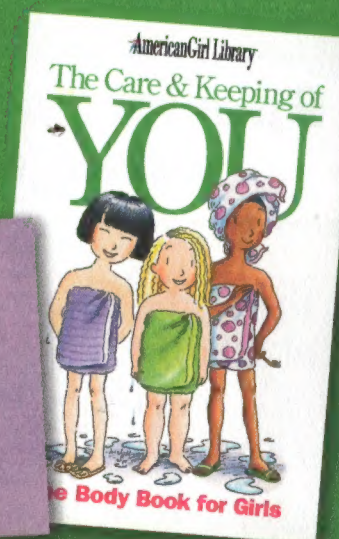
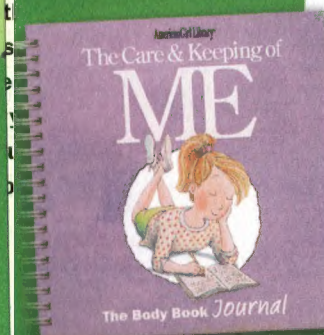
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Hurry! Offer expires October 31, 2002.

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